

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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SECURITY INFORMATION

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Resistance Group Activities

1. The Soviets on Gorodomlya Island told us of the existence of a large resistance group which existed in the swampy, woodland area surrounding Ostashkov. I recall two incidents which were related to me concerning this group. In the fall of 1949 a truck was loaded with flour in Ostashkov. At the moment the loading was completed, the truck was driven to the woods by a member of the resistance group. Two ten-man police teams were sent into the woods after the truck, but neither the police, nor the truck were ever seen again. The second incident occurred in the beginning of 1950. It had become known that a number of this group's members were coming from Moscow by train. The police surrounded the Ostashkov railway station; but, when they began examining the papers of the people who detrained, a brawl commenced and the policemen were beaten. No arrests were made.
2. A carload of butter scheduled for delivery at Gorodomlya never arrived, and the Soviets explained that this was due to the intercession of the resistance group. However, I believe this explanation was merely a pretext which offered the Soviets an excuse for the shortage. I have never heard that this group was eliminated.

Activities of Soviet Political Officials and Police

3. I heard of no Soviet political officials who embezzled. Apparently those in public office had so many advantages that they had little incentive to use their position for illegal purposes.

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4. The county political leaders in the Ostashkov area were well known as local tyrants. A girl at Gorodomlya told me that her brother was an officer in the secret police (NKVD), and that his monthly salary was 5000 rubles. It was my impression that the police were generally well paid.
5. The Soviets feared the police because of their brutality. For example, I recall the instance of a Soviet who wished to earn some extra money carrying packages. He insisted on carrying the purchases made in Ostashkov by a German woman. When she was ready to board the boat for Gorodomlya she refused to pay him, and an argument began. The police immediately jumped upon the man and began to mistreat him. He escaped and ran for a while, but was then caught again. When apprehended the second time, two policemen held and kicked him until he became unconscious. However, the culprit was not placed under arrest.
6. AGIENKO, the police chief of Gorodomlya Island, was attacked and beaten in 1950 by three men who escaped unharmed. Some of the Soviets told us of this with considerable glee.

Soviet Radio Facilities and Propaganda Techniques

7. Very few Soviets at Gorodomlya had radios capable of receiving foreign broadcasts. A large radio was usually operating in the club house, and only wired radios (loudspeaker outlets) were regularly found in private houses. Loudspeakers were located everywhere—on squares, in public buildings, factories, etc. The Germans had good radios, and we could listen freely to any broadcast we wished.
8. While at Gorodomlya [] heard an announcement over radio Leipzig that there was to be a program relating medical conditions in America, and we listened to it. We found that the lecture was an accurate description of the poor medical conditions as we knew them in the USSR. This seemed to be a very common technique of the Communist radio. The worst in the Soviet Union was related, but these conditions were ascribed to another country. This, of course, had the effect of making the Soviets believe that life in other countries was no better than in their own. 25X1
9. At another time we heard a broadcast which included the statement that the rich in America did not have to go to prison if they committed a crime. In this connection, I recall an incident which occurred on Gorodomlya. A Soviet woman was selling various goods to the Germans, including fur coats, at rather excessive prices. A German wrote to the price control office in Moscow complaining of injustice, and a three-man commission was sent to the Island. The sales were investigated, and the woman was tried and arrested. A month later we heard that she was again in business not far from Ostashkov. Selling at excessive prices to Germans apparently was no great crime against the people.

General

10. The Soviets in Ostashkov and on Gorodomlya Island did not converse much among themselves, and were reluctant to speak to foreigners. If one was seen talking to a German he was immediately under suspicion and often called away.
11. Informers at Gorodomlya were never known as such although everyone was suspected of being one. Individuals were moved as soon as their identities as informers became established. Employees were frequently transferred, and the reasons for transfer were often suspected. (These frequent changes in each section made it impossible to make close acquaintances.)

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12. As a whole, the Soviets seemed to be afraid of war, for which they believed the US was preparing. However, they were apparently convinced that a new war would mean the end of capitalism and victory for Communism. They were greatly impressed by communist conquests made in Europe and Asia at the close of World War II.

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13. I was told on several occasions that capitalism, a rigid system, was bound to fall eventually, whereas socialism, which was flexible, would adapt itself to whatever conditions existed, and would ultimately triumph.

once told me that we Germans were fortunate that the Soviets had taken us to Gorodomlya, where we were so well treated. "If the Americans had gotten you", he said, "they would have put you into sacks and flown you to America".

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14. I have already given what information I have concerning the general economic and labor conditions [redacted]. Incidentally, Soviet women have gained complete equality with men. They did much of the hard labor which would have been done by men in Germany. For example, I saw women engaged in heavy construction and lumbering details, under the supervision of men. However, I never observed any woman supervisors in similar work assignments. The Soviet women seemed to be resigned to their hard life; for example, they were often heard singing while felling trees and loading them onto trucks.

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1. [redacted] Comment. Possibly "rayon".

2. [redacted] Comment. Called Adenkov (fnu) in [redacted]

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